

# Smoke Detectors in Resident Rooms

The 2000 edition of the Life Safety Code (NFPA 101) will be enforced beginning September 11, 2003. One of the requirements of this code deals with upholstered furniture and mattresses. If your facility is NOT protected by an automatic sprinkler system, upholstered furniture or mattresses brought into the facility beginning September 11, 2003 must meet specific tests for cigarette ignition resistance and rates of heat release. Note that upholstered furniture and mattresses already in the facility on this date are not subject to this requirement.

## **NFPA 101, Life Safety Code (2000 edition) Chapter 19, Existing Health Care Occupancies**

**19.7.5.2** Newly introduced upholstered furniture within health care occupancies shall meet the criteria specified when tested in accordance with the methods cited in 10.3.2(2) and 10.3.3.

*Exception: Upholstered furniture belonging to the patient in sleeping rooms of nursing homes, provided that a smoke detector is installed in such rooms. Battery-powered single-station smoke detectors shall be permitted.*

**19.7.5.3** Newly introduced mattresses within health care occupancies shall meet the criteria specified when tested in accordance with the methods cited in 10.3.2(3) and 10.3.4.

*Exception: Mattresses belonging to the patient in sleeping rooms of nursing homes, provided that a smoke detector is installed in such rooms. Battery-powered single-station smoke detectors shall be permitted.*

Your responsibility can be determined by answering the following question:

### **IS THE FURNITURE OR MATTRESS LOCATED IN A SPACE PROTECTED BY AUTOMATIC SPRINKLERS?**

**YES.** No further requirements need to be met. Any upholstered furniture or mattresses may be used in the facility.

**NO.** Upholstered furniture or mattresses brought into the facility beginning September 11, 2003 must meet specific tests for cigarette ignition resistance and rates of heat release. Residents may bring upholstered furniture or mattresses not meeting these criteria into their room, provided that a smoke detector is installed in the room. Battery-powered single-station smoke detectors are permitted.

If battery-powered smoke detectors are installed, documentation must be available to indicate they are being maintained in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions and NFPA 72, National Fire Alarm Code. This will include weekly testing.

The following scenarios may help in understanding and applying these requirements.

**Scenario A:** A family wishes to donate upholstered furniture to the facility to be used in the day room. The facility has an automatic sprinkler system.

Since a sprinkler system is present, no further criteria must be met. The facility may accept this furniture and use it in the day room.

**Scenario B:** The facility wishes to replace four mattresses in resident rooms in the B Wing and at the same time purchase new upholstered furniture for the lounge in this wing. This wing does not have an automatic sprinkler system.

Because there is no sprinkler system, the mattresses and furniture will need to meet the specific tests identified in the Life Safety Code.

**Scenario C:** Upon admission to the facility, a resident asks to bring a recliner from home. The facility does not have an automatic sprinkler system.

Because there is no sprinkler system, the recliner must meet the specific tests identified in the Life Safety Code. If the facility cannot verify that the recliner meets these tests, the exception listed above in 19.7.5.2 would allow the installation of a smoke detector in the resident's room.